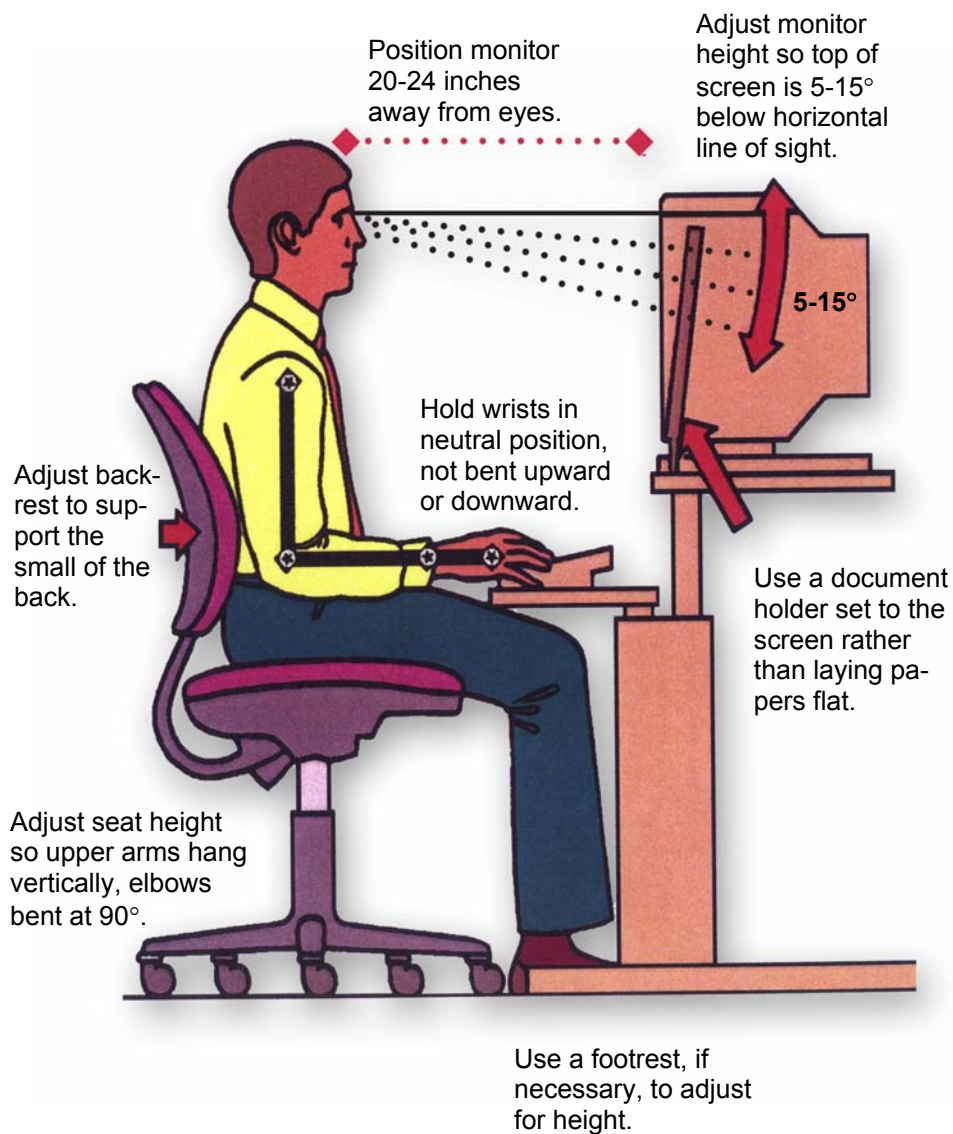


# A Guide to Fitting Your Workstation to YOU!





## Steps to Setting Up Your Computer Workstation



### Do-It-Yourself "Ergonomic Assessment" Checklist

1. Top of screen about eye level, 1 to 2 feet from eyes
2. Screen elevated to proper height.
3. Screen vertical.
4. Keyboard pitched at comfortable angle.
5. Wrists in "neutral position."
6. Forearms near parallel with floor.
7. Elbows at side.
8. Lower back supported (use cushion if necessary).
9. Back inclined 90-120 degrees away from screen.
10. Thighs supported (use cushion if necessary).
11. Knees at 90 degrees, as high or higher than hips.
12. Feet flat on floor (use stool if necessary).
13. Chair adjusted to comfortable height (see #6, 10, 11, 12).

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## STEP 1: Your Chair

- **Push your hips as far back as they can go in the chair.**

- **Adjust the seat height** so your feet are flat on the floor and your knees equal to, or slightly lower than, your hips.



- **Adjust the back of the chair to a 100°-110° reclined angle.** Make sure your upper and lower back are supported. Use inflatable cushions or small pillows if necessary. If you have an active back mechanism on your chair, use it to make frequent position changes.

- **Adjust the armrests so that your shoulders are relaxed.**



**Avoid Overreaching!**



**Keep Work Close!**



**Right!**



**Right!**

## STEP 2: Your Keyboard



An articulating keyboard tray can provide optimal positioning of input devices. However, it should accommodate the mouse, enable leg clearance, and have an adjustable height and tilt mechanism. The tray should not push you too far away from other work materials, such as your telephone.



- **Pull up close to your keyboard.**
- **Position the keyboard directly in front of your body.**
- **Determine what section of the keyboard you use most frequently,** and readjust the keyboard so that section is centered with your body.
- **Adjust the keyboard height** so that your shoulders are relaxed, your elbows are in a slightly open position ( $100^{\circ}$  to  $110^{\circ}$ ), and your wrists and hands are straight.
- **The tilt of your keyboard is dependent upon your sitting position.** Use the keyboard tray mechanism, or keyboard feet, to adjust the tilt. If you sit in a forward or upright position, try tilting your keyboard away from you at a negative angle. If you are reclined, a slight positive tilt will help maintain a straight wrist position.
- **Wrist rests can help to maintain neutral postures and pad hard surfaces.** However, the wrist rest should only be used to rest the palms of the hands between keystrokes. Resting on the wrist rest while typing is not recommended. Avoid using excessively wide wrist rests, or wrist rests that are higher than the space bar of your keyboard.
- **Place the pointer as close as possible to the keyboard.** Placing it on a slightly inclined surface, or using it on a mouse bridge placed over the 10-keypad, can help to bring it closer.

### STEP 3: Monitor, Document, and Telephone

Incorrect positioning of the screen and source documents can result in awkward postures. Adjust the monitor and source documents so that your neck is in a neutral, relaxed position.

- **Centre the monitor directly in front of you**, above your keyboard.
- **Position the top of the monitor approximately 2-3" above seated eye level.** (If you wear bifocals, lower the monitor to a comfortable reading level.)
- **Sit at least 18–24" from the screen**, adjusting the distance for your vision.
- **Reduce glare by careful positioning of the screen.**
  - Place screen at right angles to windows
  - Adjust curtains or blinds as needed
  - Adjust the vertical screen angle and screen controls to minimize glare from overhead lights
  - Other techniques to reduce glare include use of optical glass glare filters, light filters, or secondary task lights

**Position source documents directly in front of you, between the monitor and the keyboard, using an in-line copy stand.** If there is insufficient space, place source documents on a document holder positioned adjacent to the monitor.

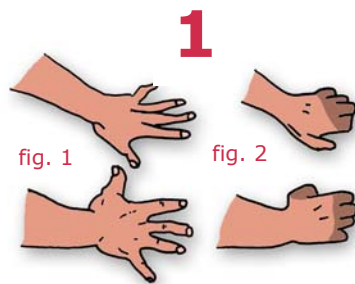
- **Place your telephone within easy reach.** Telephone stands or arms can help.
- **Use headsets and speaker phone** to eliminate cradling the handset.



## STEP 4: Pauses and Breaks

Once you have correctly set up your computer workstation, use good work habits. No matter how perfect the environment, prolonged, static postures will inhibit blood circulation and take a toll on your body.

- **Take short 1-2 minute stretch breaks every 20-30 minutes.** After each hour of work, take a break or change tasks for at least 5-10 minutes. Always try to get away from your computer during lunch breaks.
- **Avoid eye fatigue by resting and refocusing your eyes periodically.** Look away from the monitor and focus on something in the distance.
- **Rest your eyes by covering them** with your palms for 10-15 seconds.
- **Use correct posture** when working. Keep moving as much as possible.



### Easy Office Stretches

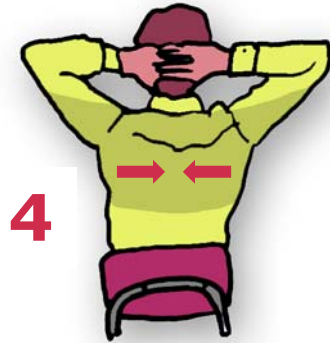
Separate and straighten your fingers until tension of a stretch is felt (fig. 1). Hold for 10 seconds. Relax, then bend your fingers at the knuckles and hold for 10 seconds (fig. 2). Repeat stretch in fig. 1 once more.



You often find a lot of tension in your face from eye strain. Raise your eyebrows and open your eyes as wide as possible. At the same time, open your mouth to stretch the muscles around your nose and chin and stick your tongue out. Hold this stretch for 5-10 seconds. **Caution: If you have clicking or popping noises when opening mouth, check with your dentist before doing this stretch.**



Shoulder Shrug: Raise the top of your shoulders toward your ears until you feel slight tension in your neck and shoulders. Hold this feeling of tension for 3-5 seconds, and then relax your shoulders downward into their normal position. Do this 2-3 times. Good to use at the first signs of tightness or tension in the shoulder and neck area.

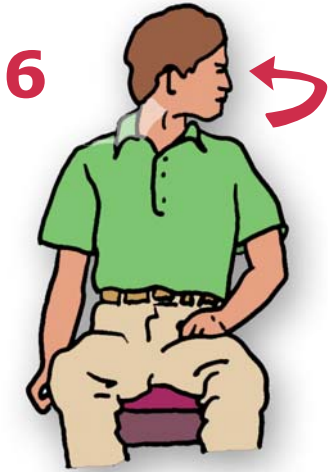


With fingers interlaced behind head, keep elbows straight out to side with upper body in a good aligned position. Now pull your shoulder blades toward each other to create a feeling of tension through upper back and shoulder blades. Hold this feeling of mild tension for 8-10 seconds, and then relax. Do several times. This is good to do when shoulders and upper back are tense or tight.



Start with head in a comfortable, aligned position. Slowly tilt head to left side to stretch muscles on side of neck. Hold stretch for 10-20 seconds. Feel a good, even stretch. Do not overstretch. Then tilt head to right side and stretch. Do 2-3 times to each side.





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From a stable, aligned position turn your chin toward your left shoulder to create a stretch on the right side of your neck. Hold right stretch tensions for 10-20 seconds. Do each side twice.



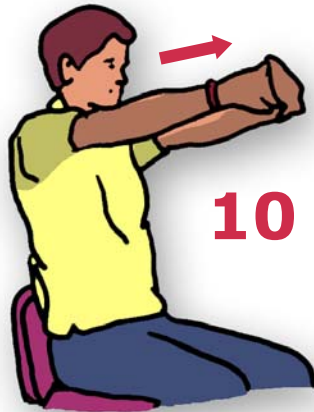
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Gently tilt your head forward to stretch the back of the neck. Hold for 5-10 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times. Hold only tensions that feel good. Do not stretch to the point of pain.

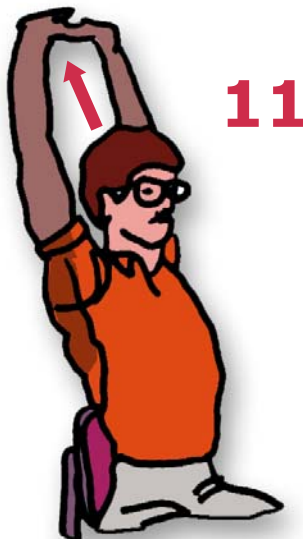
**8** Repeat stretch #3



Hold your left arm just above the elbow with the right hand. Now gently pull elbow toward opposite shoulder as you look over your left shoulder. Hold stretch for 15-20 seconds. Do both sides.



Interlace fingers, then straighten arms out in front of you. The palms should be facing away from you as you do this stretch. Feel stretch in arms and through the upper part of the back (shoulder blades). Hold stretch for 20-30 seconds. Do at least two times.



Interlace fingers then turn palms upwards above your head as you straighten your arms. Think of elongating your arms as you feel a stretch through arms and upper sides of rib cage. Hold for 10-20 seconds. Hold only stretches that feel releasing. Do three times.

**12**



Hold left elbow with right hand, then gently pull elbow behind head until an easy tension-stretch is felt in shoulder or back of upper arm (triceps). Hold easy stretch for 30 seconds. Do not overstretch. Do both sides.

**13**



Hold onto your lower leg just below the knee. Gently pull bent leg toward your chest. To isolate a stretch in the side of your upper leg, use the right arm to pull bent leg across and toward the opposite shoulder. Hold for 30 seconds at easy stretch tension. Do both sides.

**14**



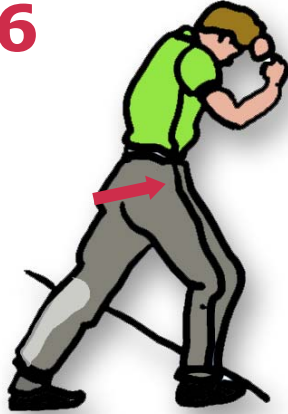
A stretch for the side of hip, lower and middle of back. Sit with left leg bent over right leg, then rest elbow or forearm of right arm on the outside of the upper thigh of the left leg. Now apply some controlled, steady pressure toward the right with the elbow or forearm. As you do this look over your left shoulder to get the stretch feeling. Do both sides. Hold for 15 seconds.

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The next stretch is an excellent stretch for shoulders and arms and is done with fingers interlaced behind your back. Slowly turn your elbows inward while straightening your arms. This is good to do when you find yourself slumping forward from your shoulders. This stretch can be done at any time. Hold for 5-15 seconds. Do twice.

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To stretch your calf, stand a little ways from a solid support and lean on it with your forearms, your head resting on your hands. Bend one leg and place your foot on the floor in front of you leaving the other leg straight, behind you. Slowly move your hips forward until you feel a stretch in the calf of your straight leg. Be sure to keep the heel of the foot of the straight leg on the floor and **your toes pointed straight ahead**. Hold an easy stretch for 30 seconds. Do not bounce. Stretch both legs.

### **Complements of:**

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<http://www.lib.msu.edu/ergomsu/>

Mark Dohrmann and Partners - *consulting ergonomists and engineers (Melbourne, Australia: 03 9376 1844)*  
<http://www.ergonomics.com.au/howtosit.htm>

US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine  
<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/ergopgm/ergohome.htm>

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